



# Surrendering the One Up Activities and Strategies for Educators

Surrendering the One Up Relationship is a set of specific strategies that help educators build authentic, unconditional relationships that help all students feel understood, valued, and safe. When done effectively, Surrendering the One Up Relationship is the X-factor for motivating all student to action and seeing their potential.

Most strategies and activities we use to Surrender the One Up fall into three categories.

1. Strategies that help us create **student connection**.
2. Strategies that facilitate **student empowerment**.
3. Strategies that are **student centered**.

*This is a sample of some of our strategies that facilitate student empowerment*

## Student Empowerment

**You Give the Grade:** Allow students the opportunity on an assignment to grade themselves. You may want to tell them what criteria you would use for grading, but ultimately they get to decide.

**You're the Leader:** Allow students the opportunity to lead in different situations during the class. Examples include starting class, running an activity, teaching something, doing projects, etc.

**You've Got the Blues:** Tell the class that you realize that life can be challenging at home, school, or with peers. Because of that, you will give them a specific number of BLUE cards they can cash in at any time for dropping an assignment or a quiz, getting extended time on a test or larger assignment, etc.

**Classroom Design Theme:** Put your students into groups and let them come up with a theme and blueprint for decoration and design for your classroom or office. Use some of their elements so that the students feel like they have ideas represented in the overall design of the classroom decor or even your door to your room or office.

**Passion Presenter:** When you have learned about your students, bring in an outside presenter that is either a professional or expert on one of the interests and hobbies of your students. The

guest can do a presentation that can be informative or fun for the students and hopefully build upon their passion, interest or hobby. You can even gather ideas from students on who to bring into the class.

**Video Project:** Make a video with your students. It can relate to your content. Have them help you write out what the video will be and then carry out the project with them. This isn't an assignment you are giving them, but rather something you are working on together. For example, you may say: I want to make a video for the school about the negative affects of Labeling others. I'm going to show it to the administration so they know what we are learning about.

**Quote Board:** Create a quote board on a wall or bulletin board where you put up quotes and saying your students provide or really like. Start with some of your own and build it from there.

**Failure Wall:** Create a space where you put up an artifact, picture, word that represents times you make a mistake and then process with your students what you learned from it. If students ever feel comfortable you may be able to even facilitate students wanting to put things on the failure wall. There is power letting students see it is okay to have mistakes and learn from them.

**Our Class Against the World:** Let's prove them wrong. Discuss what others think are limits to what the class can achieve and set a goal to prove them wrong. Allow your students to decide what that goal should look like or sound like.

**You Teach, We Learn:** Give assignments or projects where the student can be the expert or teacher. Give them the opportunity to instruct you and the other students in the class.

**You Make the Call:** Give students several options on a project or assignment and allow them to choose which one they would like to do.

**How You Share is Your Choice:** Allow students the opportunity to choose how they will respond to certain prompts or questions. Some students feel more comfortably using art, others speech, some music, others through story. Give options for how students share their processing of principles and ideas.

**Reward Courage:** Find opportunities to reward students who show courage. When students are celebrated for speaking up, sharing ideas, or taking action, it will create a class culture where allowing your voice to be heard is valued.

**Choice Boards:** A choice board is either a physical object or digital creation where students actively choose projects or assignments they want to do in whatever order they choose. This can be used both with a whole class or with individual students.

**Calming Centers/Rooms:** This can be done in a virtual or physical environment. This is a space where a student can go and have control over what they do in order to calm down from emotional responses to something, anxiety, or for coping. We've included several examples of virtual calming centers below:

Jennifer Kortge's Calming Center: <https://bit.ly/3k7UKJv>

Ashley Wright's Calming Center: [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1X6ZYXoOFnKX2HZ9FY5RPkUformEWocSPV-8Z0x\\_\\_2lk/present?slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1X6ZYXoOFnKX2HZ9FY5RPkUformEWocSPV-8Z0x__2lk/present?slide=id.p)

